

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston
Office of Archives & Records
Collection Development Policy
Revised: July 05, 2012

ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Archives of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston (hereafter, “the Diocese”), was created in 1979 and is governed by the provisions of *The Code of Canon Law*. The Archives contains a significant collection of historical records and artifacts relating to the history of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston and Catholicism in West Virginia.

The following collection development policy provides direction for the collecting process, establishes guidelines and procedures for collections organization, and determines priorities for the collections’ future.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Archives of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is to establish an Archives and Records Management Program for central diocesan administration, local parishes, diocesan schools and related diocesan and lay institutions and organizations. The Archives also seeks to make records and artifacts available for research and educational purposes. The Archives will promote an understanding of the origins, aims, and goals of the diocese as reflected in the workings of the official diocesan agencies, institutions, and offices. Official diocesan records are defined as

All recorded information, regardless of media type or characteristics, made or received and maintained by an agency, institution, or office of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston in pursuance of its legal obligations or in the transaction of its business.

The Archives operates in accordance with Canon 482, which charges the Chancellor with the responsibility for the Archives. The Director of Archives assists the Chancellor in fulfilling those duties and responsibilities related to the proper maintenance and administration of the Archives.

To further this mission, the Director of Archives will:

1. Collect, process, and retain only those records that are determined to be of specific historic, cultural, or sacral value to the Diocese, or are required to be retained by civil or ecclesiastical law.
2. Collect, preserve, and make available for research those records and artifacts of lay individuals and organizations associated with the Diocese.

3. Promote an understanding of the origins, aims, and goals of the Diocese as reflected in the workings of the official diocesan agencies, institutions and offices.
4. Work cooperatively with other local archival and historical organizations to ensure that the history of the Diocese and the West Virginia Catholic community is adequately documented.
5. Arrange and describe the Diocese's archival records and artifacts and produce appropriate finding aids.
6. Encourage the use of diocesan archival records by diocesan officials, the Catholic community, historians, and genealogy researchers.
7. Render maximum service to diocesan personnel and researchers so they can quickly and easily obtain requested information.
8. Interpret these archival records and artifacts for the education and enjoyment of the general public through exhibitions, publications, and programs.
9. Maintain confidentiality of records which are legally protected or which involve an expectation of privacy either canonically or ethically.
10. Provide records control for the Diocese and establish standards for proper records management in diocesan offices and departments.
11. Train diocesan personnel in the most effective methods of controlling and managing records.
12. Prepare and maintain a disaster preparedness and recovery plan.

COLLECTIONS AND PROGRAM SCOPES

The Archives' historical records and artifacts are divided and organized into three programs and one collection:

Archives Program – This program is managed by the Director of Archives. The archives houses the historical Diocesan records preserved because of their continuing or enduring value. The core collections of the Archives are the records of official agencies, institutions, and offices, Bishops' papers, miscellaneous personal papers, photographs, mixed media, and reference books. Additional collections of the Archives consist of the ancillary records of individuals and organizations engaged in work that is reflective of the work of and contributes to the mission of the Diocese.

Offices are defined as the administrative units of the Diocesan Curia and Diocesan Services.

Agencies and institutions are defined as those administrative units that perform specific functions

and maintain an operational relationship to the Bishop. Such agencies and institutions may be operated by another public or private juridic person, but remain under governance of the Diocesan Bishop as regards the erection of the institution or agency, the external exercise of the apostolate, and those acts of governance which have effect external to the juridic person. The Parishes, as public juridic persons, as well as Catholic schools, parochial or central, within the Diocese are considered as equivalent to agencies for the purpose of these policies.

Artifacts Collection - The Artifacts Collection is composed of objects used by the clergy, the religious, and the laity of the Diocese dating from 1850 to the present, whose administration is conducted in accord with universal law (Canon 1189-1190). Religious artifacts include liturgical vestments, chalices, altar linens, home mass kits, relics, and reliquaries. The collection also includes art objects and gifts donated to previous Bishops. Corporate memorabilia such as seals and insignia are also included.

Microfilm Program - The Microfilm Program involves the microfilming of parish sacramental records for preservation and security purposes. If the original documents are destroyed or lost, the information contained within can be retrieved from a microfilm format. A vinyl acetate copy is maintained in the Archives and a silver halide copy is placed in an off-site storage facility. All parishes and cemeteries in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston are to have their records microfilmed every twenty-five years. The Director of Archives may also recommend other microfilm or digital projects as needed.

Records Management Program - The Records Management Program administers paper or electronic records that must be retained for legal, fiscal, or administrative purposes. These records are retained or destroyed according to an established records schedule. Those records that have outlived their legal, fiscal, or administrative value may be transferred to the Archives Program for permanent retention. All records in the Records Management Program are housed in a location separate from the Archives Collection.

PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION CONSIDERATIONS

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston has an obligation to maintain and preserve its collections and artifacts according to professional standards. Decisions regarding collecting must be made in accordance with the best interest and well being of the individual collection or artifact.

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

The Archivist manages the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's collections and submits reports to the Chancellor. The Archivist is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Archives. The Archivist, other staff or volunteer(s) will employ the guidelines regarding collections management as detailed in the Collections Management Manual.

The Director of Archives will report annually on collections related activity to the Chancellor. This report will summarize the previous year's collections related activities, including (but not limited to) all accession and deaccessions, all incoming and outgoing loans, condition evaluations, and specific projects involving care, conservation, use, research, or inventory of the

collections. The Annual Report is designed to inform the Chancellor of collections activities and serves as a long-term evaluation tool.

ACQUISITIONS

Acquisition is defined as the discovery, evaluation, acknowledgement, and receipt of archival records and artifacts, as well as securing physical and legal custody of said records and artifacts.

Mechanism and Criteria - The Archives accepts acquisitions to its collections through donation, purchase, bequest, field collection, commission, abandonment, prescription, or other transaction by which title to the object passes to the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. No record(s) or artifact(s) shall be knowingly or willfully accepted or acquired which are known to have been illegally imported into or illegally collected in the United States contrary to state or federal law, regulation, treaty, or convention.

Potential acquisitions must meet all of the following criteria before being accepted into the Archives Program:

1. The present owner must have clear title of ownership.
2. The provenance and significance of record(s) or artifact(s) must be determined to the extent possible.
3. The record(s) or artifact(s) must fall within the Archives collecting scope and objectives.
4. The Archives must be able to care for and maintain the record(s) or artifact(s) according to accepted standards.
5. The record(s) or artifact(s) must be in acceptable physical condition.
6. If purchased, the seller and the Archives must agree on a fair market price.
7. All donations will be considered outright and unconditional gifts to be used at the discretion of the Archives. Copyright provisions will be discussed at time of transfer.
8. All legal, moral, and ethical implications of an acquisition must be considered prior to its acceptance into the collections.

Donations - The Director of Archives must approve all donations to the Archives and will evaluate collections or objects according to the Archives acquisitions criteria detailed above.

Donors pursuing income tax deductions for their donations must obtain an independent appraisal from an authorized appraiser. The Director of Archives will not provide appraisals of potential donations nor recommend appraisers.

The Director of Archives is under no obligation to accept donations “on the spot.” The Archives may hold the collection(s) or object(s), *circumstances permitting*, temporarily until a decision is made. A Temporary Holding Receipt will be issued to donors pending that decision. Such items in the care of the Archives will be temporarily identified and cared for in the same manner as permanent collections.

Items not accepted in to the Archives collections will be returned to the donor, notifying the donor by registered mail. The donor will have sixty business days (after postmark) to reclaim their items. Those items left after sixty days will be deemed abandoned and disposed of at the discretion of the Director of Archives.

The Director of Archives will determine the placement of the donation within the Archives collections, in light of the object itself, the needs of the Archives, and the original intentions of the donor. Those items not accepted into the Archives collections may be used for other activities, which may include, but are not limited to loan or sale.

Closing or Suppression of Affiliated Diocesan Institutions - The Director of Archives will be contacted in the event of a school closing, parish suppression, or closing of an affiliated diocesan institution. The Director of Archives will inventory historical records or artifacts and determine if they should be transferred to the Archives. If fragile records are still needed for use, the Director of Archives will provide a legible copy of the records to the affiliated agency or institution.

The Archives will also be considered the repository of last resort for those agencies or institutions that do not have a governing agency to accept their records or artifacts.

ACCESSIONS

Accessioning is the formal process of accepting record(s) or object(s) into the Archives collections. The Director of Archives has primary responsibility for completing and maintaining all necessary paperwork and for the care and storage of all accessions.

PROCESSING OF ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS AND HISTORICAL ARTIFACTS

Processing involves the activities intended to facilitate the use of archival records, manuscript collections, or artifacts through their arrangement, description, and preservation.

The Director of Archives processes the various Archives Collections. Other staff members and volunteers may process collections with prior approval, training, and supervision from the Director of Archives. Collections will be processed only after they have been accessioned.

Researchers may not use unprocessed collections without receiving special approval and making arrangements with the Director of Archives.

DEACCESSIONS

Deaccessioning is the formal process of removing accessioned records or artifacts permanently from the Archives collections. Deaccessioning is a serious undertaking and not to be entered into lightly. Such action will be cautious, deliberate, and scrupulous. Material being considered for deaccessioning will include that which (is):

1. Only those artifacts for which the Archives have clear title for seven years may be considered for deaccessioning.
2. Clearly outside the scope of the Archives collections as determined by the Statement of Purpose, collections scope, and collecting objectives.
3. Void of inherent exhibition, research, or educational value.
4. Duplicate(s) of objects of records already in collections.
5. In an advanced state of disrepair and determined to be beyond effective conservation efforts.
6. Cannot be cared for properly by the Archives.
7. Non-historical material accessioned in error.
8. Lost or stolen.
9. Presents a threat to the health, safety, or well being of the Archives staff, volunteers, patrons, or other archives collections.

Procedure

Formal recommendations for deaccessions are made by the Director of Archives and submitted for approval to the Chancellor. All deaccessions are subject to final approval by the Chancellor. The Director of Archives will complete a “Recommendation for Deaccession” proposal detailing the justification for deaccessioning and a plan for disposal. Appropriate means of disposal are as follows:

1. Transfer to the Education Collection or Recycling Program.
2. Donation to another archives, museum, historical site or agency, or affiliated religious institution in good standing.
3. Trade or exchange with another archives, museum, historic site or agency, or affiliated religious institution in good standing.
4. Donation to an appropriate non-profit or educational facility in good standing.
5. Sell at not substantially less than fair market value at a publicly advertised sale or auction (after receiving a professional appraisal)
6. Witnessed destruction.

Upon approval from the Chancellor, and prior to disposal, the Director of Archives will remove Archives accession numbers and any other mark of ownership from the object. All deaccession action will be thoroughly documented and noted in all object records.

LOANS, EXHIBITS, AND REPRODUCTIONS

Outgoing Loans - The Archives of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston may occasionally allow records and artifacts from its collections to be loaned to other museums, historic sites or agencies, and affiliated religious institutions in good standing for educational, interpretative, exhibit, or scholarly purposes. Non-museum borrowers (government agencies, corporations or businesses, etc.) may utilize the Archives collections for educational purposes only. Use of borrowed artifacts for private or decorative purposes is prohibited. All loans are negotiated and considered at the discretion of the Director of Archives and Chancellor. ***The Archives makes no loans to individuals.***

The only records and artifacts that may be considered for loan are those which the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston holds clear title to, have been placed in the Archives, and do not have special restrictions. Sacred and precious objects are excluded from loan. All borrowers must agree to the following conditions:

1. Records or artifacts must be cared for according to the stipulations of the Archives.
2. No record or artifact is loaned permanently.
3. Loaned material shall not be conserved without the consent of the Archivist.
4. Loaned archival records or artifacts shall not be reproduced (photographically or otherwise) without the express consent of the Archives.
5. Whenever possible, reproductions of the Archives materials will be created for exhibit purposes in order to protect the originals. Only good quality reproductions of records and photographs will be used in exhibits. With prior and specific consent, reproductions may be exhibited indefinitely.
6. If good quality reproduction of materials cannot be substituted, original materials may be used for short-term exhibit purposes only. Precautions must be taken to protect the exhibited items from deterioration. The Director of Archives must examine all the materials before approval can be given for exhibition. The Director of Archives will prepare a report on the condition of the item(s) and set the standards of exhibit conditions. The Director of Archives will keep records of exhibited items and inspect them on a regular basis. If the Director of Archives observes evidence of deterioration, the items will be removed from the exhibit.
7. The Archives of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston must be acknowledged and noted if records or artifacts are exhibited (for example, *Courtesy of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Archives*).
8. The Archives reserves the right to terminate the loan with thirty days notice, or immediately if loan terms are violated.

The Archivist is responsible for the negotiation and tracking of all loans, and manages all necessary paperwork. The Archivist shall submit a semi-annual report noting all loan activity to the Chancellor.

Application for outgoing loans must be received at least thirty days in advance and must be authorized by the Archivist and the Chancellor. A written loan agreement will be drawn up and signed by both parties prior to the records' or artifacts' release. The loan agreement will detail the following, as necessary:

1. Duration of the loan.
2. Insurance coverage and liability.
3. Exhibition location and security, storage, handling, and transport conditions, and restrictions.
4. Condition reports.
5. Loan fees.
6. Provisions for return.
7. Packing.
8. Photograph restrictions.
9. Emergency notification procedures.

CARE AND USE OF COLLECTIONS

Collections Care Statement - The Archives of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is canonically mandated to care for and preserve its collections. The Archives is committed to providing proper storage areas in which to house collections, maintaining appropriate environmental controls within its facilities, and administering conservation efforts when necessary. The goal is to retard and/or stabilize the inherent aging and deterioration process of collections. All accepted professional archival and museum standards are employed.

Records - The Archives of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston will maintain proper collections records for all records and artifacts in its collections according to professional archival and museum standards. These include, but are not limited to, accession, donor, catalog, provenance, insurance, conservation, loan, and exhibit records. The Director of Archives is responsible for all collections records. Access to collections records is strictly limited to the Director of Archives and the Chancellor.

Inventory - The Director of Archives will regularly inventory the collections for collection management purposes, security, and verification of missing artifacts. The archival staff will conduct a full-scale inventory not less than once every two years. Smaller inventories of specific collections or parts of collections will be conducted at the direction of the Director of Archives. A master collections inventory will be placed on a computer database and updated as subsequent inventories are conducted.

In accordance with the provisions of Canon 491 §1, all public and private juridic persons hierarchically dependent on the Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston will submit an inventory of their records and artifacts to the Archives. Each institution will also keep a copy of the inventory in its records.

Security - The Archives will take all necessary precautions to insure the security of its collections and prevent their loss or damage while on exhibit, during research use, or in storage. The Archives will examine the security needs and risks for all objects under consideration for accession and make adjustments or accommodations where possible. Artifact use for exhibit, research, education, or loan is contingent upon a thorough evaluation of its security risks and needs, and the ability of the Archives to accommodate those needs.

Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Plan - The Director of Archives will prepare and maintain a disaster preparedness plan listing the appropriate contact persons and procedures to follow for proper recovery and transfer of the collections in the event of a fire, emergency, or natural disaster.

ETHICS POLICY REGARDING COLLECTIONS

As stewards of the religious and material history of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston and its affiliated organizations, the Archives' staff has an obligation and responsibility to maintain the highest ethical standards, and avoid even the appearance of impropriety or conflict of interest. It is necessary that all Archives staff and volunteers observe certain restrictions on activities that might compete with or discredit the Archives. To this end, the following provisions have been established.

1. No Archives staff or volunteer will engage in appraising objects acquired by the Archives.
2. No Archives staff or volunteer may recommend an appraiser for donors.
3. Archives staff will comply with all local, state, and federal laws pertaining to non-profit and tax-exempt organizations.
4. Archives staff and volunteers are prohibited from purchasing or claiming objects deaccessioned by the Archives.